Is The UN A Nest of Spies? See Page 2.

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This May Be The Last Chance

Washington, D. C.

THE CATCH WORD OF THE MOMENT in American foreign policy is "disengagement." The most important task of disengagement in the world today is for the United Nations to disengage itself from American domination. The second part of the Seventh session of the General Assembly opening in New York may prove to be the UN's last chance to save world peace. This can only be done if the organization moves out firmly on an independent line of its own.

It would no longer be fair to say that U. S. policy is not in the hands of sober men. Realities have been rapidly sobering the new Republican Administration, ever since Eisenhower himself came back from Korea with the bad news that there were no trick solutions. Unfortunately a swift succession of morning-afters have not been enough to keep the Administration from new binges in an effort to ingratiate itself with the roughs on Capitol Hill where sobriety is suspect. Never has a drunken diplomacy fired off so many duds as in the few weeks since Eisenhower and Dulles took office.

THERE IS MUCH TALK HERE in Washington of the need for keeping the Russians guessing. If that is the prime objective of the new Republican policy, it must be accounted a success. It has everybody guessing. The Russians indeed may be completely unnerved, like a chess master confronted with moves so eccentric he cannot tell whether he is playing an unknown genius or a flea circus idiot. By now Washington must look as much an enigma to Moscow as Moscow usually does to Washington. One week Eisenhower "takes the wraps" off Chiang in a dramatic move which makes sense only if it is the first step in engaging American power on the giant task of "liberating" China. A few weeks later the objective is to "disengage" from the relatively petty military tasks of liberating Korea.

From whatever direction one looks at this pattern it is difficult to assume—as a scientist might say—that it is the product of rationality. Korea is the classic land-bridge for invasions of China. It is our one bridgehead on the mainland. If the purpose is to liberate China from Communism, the bridgehead ought to be widened and more troops poured in for the next step, which would be Manchuria. To "disengage" from Korea while committing oneself to the reconquest of China would be like "disengaging" one's hold on Belgium while committing oneself to the reconquest of Western Europe.

The pattern is no less weird if one starts with the hypothesis that the sudden turn to "disengagement" reflects victory for those like General Bradley long opposed to the wrong war at the wrong place. If the purpose is to disengage American forces in Korea in order to build up strength for action elsewhere against China or Russia, then it is hardly the wisdom of the serpent to disclose that strategy in advance by so much loud talk about never reconciling ourselves to Communist domination anywhere. The Chinese and the Russians will not let us "disengage" ourselves if they feel that the forces released on the 38th parallel may turn up closer home than Korea. The enemy will not let the eagle's talon out of the Korean trap unless assured that it will not strike elsewhere.

THERE IS EVERYTHING to be said of course for a real policy of "disengagement." The Korean conflict is a military stalemate and a military stalemate calls for a negotiated peace. The Korean conflict is a preview of the wider and more terrible stalemate into which a World War III would bog down. It should also be a warning to that larger "peninsula" at the other end of the Eurasian land-mass. All the horror visited on Korea by a great power duel fought so conveniently on small power territory may be repeated in Western Europe.

"Disengagement" is likewise called for when regarded from the standpoint of genuine American defense considerations. To the extent that America fears a possible Russian conflict, it is folly to tie down a major part of our armed forces in an unimportant sector. It is also folly to be drawn further along the road to full-scale war with China if one fears war with Russia. These considerations obviously play their part in the calculations which lie behind the Eisenhower-Dulles slogan of letting "Asians fight Asians." But the bulk of the Asians are either neutral or on the other side. It is exactly as if we were to raise the slogan of letting Europeans fight Europeans if all we had to rely on was a Norway torn like Indo China by civil war and a Franco regime which had been ousted from Spain and was ensconced in the Azores, while Germany and England were as neutral as India and Indonesia.

UNFORTUNATELY THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION (see page four) is proving less the master in its own house than was Truman's. The China Lobby rides herd on the new Administration, while an impatient and peaceful people cast about for some quick and easy pushbutton to press for victory. Three years ago, on the eve of the Korean war, Truman and Acheson all but invited the UN to solve their problems by voting Communist China a seat in the UN and "forcing" them to recognize realities. Their successors as badly need to be forced into a Korean settlement, but dare not appear to be asking for it. The situation is one in which every day's delay invites the desperadoes around Chiang to precipitate the world conflict which is their hope. Allied with them are a handful of unscrupulous men here who believe that war is necessary and that only a Fascist America can fight it.

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Horror or Hoax? The Spy Charges Against the UN

NEW YORK

AS USUAL, THE ACCUSATION was news but the reply made no headlines. Almost unnoticed by the press, counsel for 20 dismissed UN employes filed briefs on appeal here last week with the United Nations Administrative Tribunal. The cases, to be argued in April, will reverberate round the world. On the agenda of the General Assembly of the United Nations, which convenes again in New York this week, is the question of personnel policy. This, which at first sight would seem an obscure and innocuous question, involves the independence of the United Nations. Whether it will knuckle under to the current American witch-hunt will be decided by the decision of the Administrative Tribunal and the debate in the General Assembly.

The background is a propaganda campaign four years old to picture the UN to the American people as a nest of spies. No charge has been more frequently rebutted. None has more dramatically illustrated the power of reiteration in the technique of the Big Lie. The appendix to the main brief filed jointly by three law firms for nineteen discharged employees provides a quick summary of that long exploit in denigration, its refutations and repetitions. It began with the testimony of the assistant chief of the State Department's visa division in July, 1948; he made himself a favorite with the McCarran committee by declaring that several hundred foreign agents used jobs in the UN as a cover for their activity. Next day Secretary of State George Marshall told a press conference that he did not know of a single case of foreign espionage in the UN. He nevertheless appointed a special committee of three leading citizens, including the editor of the respected conservative Washington Star, to investigate. They not only found no substance in the charges but formally reported in September that they were shocked by the "irresponsible" way these charges had been made.

THIS DID NOT KEEP the McCarran committee from hashing them up again the following July, this time through the secret testimony of an unnamed witness identified only as No. 8. The bombardment was stepped up two days later with "UN Aide Accused as A Red Courier," though the aide, Mrs. Mary Jane Keeney, had declared under oath that she was not and never had been a Communist and denied that she was ever a courier. The "courier" incident had itself been picked up by the McCarran committee from an earlier horror story which made headlines for the House Un-American Activities Committee. Mrs. Keeney was alleged to have stepped off a ship from Europe on March 9, 1946, and passed a large manila envelope to a man "suspected of being engaged in Soviet espionage." The man's name was given, the statute of limitations had not run, both he and Mrs. Keeney were subject to prosecution if the charges were true. The fact that no indictment has ever been returned is the best comment on these wild charges, but that did not keep them from being used again by McCarthy in his February 12, 1950, attack on the State Department. When Secretary General Trygve Lie discharged Mrs. Keeney the next year, the Administrative Tribunal after hearing her case ordered her reinstated.

LIKE A WELL-TIMED STINK BOMB, the old charges were blown up again last Fall by the McCarran Committee just three days before the Seventh General Assembly convened in New York. The American Legion Magazine appeared on the stands with a scare story about Red spies in the UN. Senator Herbert O'Conor, Democrat, of Maryland, after hearing ten witnesses made headlines with the charge that the committee had found "American traitors on the payroll of the United States and the United Nations."

Spies and traitors are strong words. If American intelligence had "tips" that certain UN employes were engaged in espionage, the tips were valuable. Followed up, they offered a means not only of prosecuting such people but of uncovering their associates. The FBI and other intelligence agencies have many ways of following through. Wires are tapped, "cover" is put on the mail of suspects. They can be followed and watched. Conversely there is also the presumption that when such charges have been kicked around privately and publicly for so many years without resulting in an indictment, there must be something wrong with the charges.

Assistant Secretary of State Hickerson tried to tell the McCarran committee last December 31, "The Department has not had evidence justifying the conclusion that there was spying or espionage on the part of American citizens employed by the United Nations." He added pointedly, "If either the Department of State or the Department of Justice had had evidence justifying such a conclusion, prompt action would have been taken under the criminal laws of the United States by the Department of Justice which has responsibility for enforcing those laws."

In any case, the Assistant Secretary of State told the committee, the UN "would probably be one of the last places" that an agent would be placed. "We transmit no classified information to the Secretariat," Hickerson explained.

A SPECIAL GRAND JURY HAD BEEN impaneled in June, 1951, in the Southern District of New York to look into "subversive activities and espionage." It sat for 18 months. It claimed in a "presentment" made public last December 2 to have uncovered "startling evidence" showing the "infiltration" of the UN by "scores of individuals" who were subversive. If the Grand Jury in its 18 months of work had collected "startling evidence" it was its duty to return indictments. None were returned. The most startling case described by it was that of "a United States citizen accused before us in sworn and uncontradicated testimony of having been a Soviet agent while employed by the United States government." Even in this case there was no indictment.

Either the Grand Jury was remiss in its duty or guilty of considerable overstatement. Some of the grand jurors hit the headlines a second time with the claim that government officials had tried to keep them from filing the presentment. When hearings were held on these new charges by a subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee, they showed that government officials had indeed been divided on the wisdom of the grand jury's action. Charles P. Murray, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division of the U. S. Department of Justice testified that Roy M. Cohn, then a special assistant to the Attorney General, had urged issuance of the presentment "to beat the McCarran Committee to the headlines." Cohn has since been elevated to the post of chief counsel to the new McCarthy investigating committee.

Murray testified that he believed it the sole function of a grand jury "to indict or not to indict." He said he was against "presentments" which were really "statements by Grand Jurors which, for lack of evidence, fall short of accusing anybody of crime, and therefore cannot be defended by the persons who were named."

"Finally," Assistant Attorney General Murray said, "I believe that it is most important in times of emergency as well as in other times that the normal functions of government be pursued according to their normal course. I am against government by hysteria, (or) by alternate hysteria and lassitude. I believe that an even, fearless performance of functions allocated to the various agencies who mind their own business is the very best cure for Communism or any other evil."

A GRAND JURY CAN INDICT whom it pleases. The prosecuting official has great influence but cannot control it. A prima facie case on the basis of what the prosecution alone has to offer is enough and the grand jury is the ultimate judge of that. In this case obviously neither the Grand Jury nor Roy Cohn, the special prosecutor, had the nerve to indict anybody.

"What the Tribunal must already have suspected," says the brief for the 19 discharged UN employes, "should by now be inescapably clear. The charges of espionage, subversive activity and the like are but an elaborate and cruel hoax invented to conceal the fact that the applicants were terminated for reasons of alleged conviction, sentiment and affiliation alone. . . Fear engendering claims of espionage, spy rings and sabotage are the invariable means of ensuring the political destruction of individuals whose sole offense is their political non-conformity."

Unless the FBI itself is infiltrated and sabotaging the enforcement of the laws, it is impossible to take these repeated charges seriously, except as part of a conspiracy to defame the UN and terrorize its employees.

Next Week: The UN and the Fifth Amendment.

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COMMENT

Vacuous Velde

OUR HAT IS OFF this week to Mrs. Agnes E. Meyer for the speech she made in Atlantic City at the meeting of the American Association of School Administrators. The wife of the owner of the *Washington Post,* herself well known as a writer and social worker, Mrs. Meyer gave Velde, Jenner and McCarthy the drubbing they deserve. The best part of her speech went unnoticed by most newspapers. Mrs. Meyer said neither McCarthy nor Jenner nor Velde had "the moral or intellectual qualifications" to investigate the nation's colleges. As a sample of Velde's IQ, she pointed to a bill the ex-FBI man has introduced which would require the Librarian of Congress to mark all subversive matter in the Library of Congress. "The man doesn't make sense," Mrs. Meyer said briskly.

There are 9,000,000 volumes in the Library of Congress, and Velde's naive proposal leads to some interesting arithmetic. A staff of 200 employes smart enough to go through five volumes a day would require 30 years to do the job. It would be hard to get such mental giants at less than $4,000 a year. At that rate the job would cost $240,000,000.

More complicated would be the task of deciding in advance just what was a "subversive" book. The ex-FBI man does not seem to have realized that this was a problem at all. But once you got past Marx, Lenin and Stalin, with the smaller fry Communists, what would you do about the Socialists, the anarchists, the subtler fellows who undermine faith in free enterprise, the atheists and agnostics and anti-clericals? What would you do about those writings of Jefferson, which advocate wetting the tree of liberty at regular intervals with the blood of tyrants? Or those papers in which Madison anticipated Marx in his economic class analysis of society? There are men who trace subversion back to 1917 and others who go back to 1789. There are some who think Freud and Einstein subversive as there were men who thought Bruno, Galileo and Spinoza subversive. The Catholics still have some of these great men on their Index; the Protestants, as the Scopes trial revealed, are not immune to a similar obscurantism. Which standard should guide the Librarian of Congress? I can see him nervously looking at Lobachevski's historic little pioneering paper in non-Euclidean geometry and wondering nervously just how he ought to list it. It subverted Euclid.

Nothing could better illustrate the vacuity of the witch hunters than this simple-minded idea of Velde's that all he had to do was introduce a bill and the Library of Congress could quickly stamp "subversive" on the books all right thinking Americans ought to avoid.

Senator Taft In Liberal Mood

OUR HAT IS ALSO OFF this week to Senator Taft for the views he expressed on academic freedom after a speech to the National Canners Association in Chicago. Indeed the Senator's views seemed sounder and more logical than Mrs. Meyer's. Mrs. Meyer thought Communists should be dismissed from faculties but Senator Taft told a press conference after the canners' meeting he felt it would be "inconsistent with freedom of thought" to dismiss a professor "simply for being a Communist" unless he was teaching Communism or trying to influence his students in that direction.

The weakness of Mrs. Meyer's view is that once you say Communists should be barred from teaching, the door is wide open to the witch hunters to determine who is a Communist. The ban at once leads to the assumption that any teachers who are Communists will naturally hide their views to keep their jobs. The only way to find them will then be by watching for tell-tale evidences of non-conformity. The strength of Senator Taft's view is that it does not compromise the basic principle of freedom and leaves men to be judged by what they say and do, not by what some inquisitor thinks they are really thinking. That way leads straight to George Orwell's thought police.

Our Not So Independent Judiciary

THE TWELFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION of the National Lawyers Guild, which still miraculously survives and thrives, could not have picked a more deserving recipient for its Roosevelt Award than Delbert E. Metzger, who was denied reappointment to the U. S. District Court in Hawaii because he declined to knuckle under to the Department of Justice and refuse bail to Smith Sedition Act defendants. There has been no more blatant attack in our time on the independence of the judiciary than occurred last year in Metzger's case.

In accepting the award Judge Metzger said derisively that the FBI itself "after long investigation" found only 60 "subversives" among Hawaii's half million people. The Judge wanted to know how such a handful could constitute "a clear and present danger." He added, "My remarks I suppose make it clear why I was not reappointed to my Federal judgeship, particularly when judges who preside over Smith Act trials where there are convictions are promptly promoted, and Smith Act prosecutors are made judges".

New Ally, New Bank

IN A WORLD THAT SEEMS terribly impermanent it is good to hear that something goes on, as if forever. Dr. Hjalmar Horace Greeley Schacht has opened a new bank at Dusseldorff in the heart of the industrial Ruhr and another near the port of Hamburg. His namesake, Horace Greeley, advised the young man to go west, but Schacht's version is to go anywhere politically for a fast buck. He managed the feat of being a pillar of the Weimar Republic and then of the Third Reich. Now he reenters the banking business just in time to participate in financing the liberation of Eastern Europe, unless of course the Soviet Union should take over Western Germany, in which case our stalwart new ally would no doubt manage to emerge as Commissar of Finance.

Call for Volunteers

The Weekly is now being distributed through several hundred stands in New York and Brooklyn. I hope soon to invade the Bronx, Queens, perhaps even Westchester and North Jersey. But distribution in other cities and smaller towns is much more difficult. There are usually only one or two stands in the smaller cities which handle liberal and literary papers and magazines. I would like to build a mailing list of such stands. I would appreciate it if those readers in the smaller towns who have the time would get in touch with stands of this kind for me and find out whether they would like to handle the Weekly.

—I. F. Stone

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Another of Mc Carthy's Little Reichstag Fires

WASHINGTON, D. C.

ESPECIALLY IN FRANCE, where the sense of the ludicrous is strong and the public likes its fun well spiced with sex, the new Voice of America hearings must be a big success. The French will be delighted by the young lady with the trim figure who was "a little bit sort of stunned" when her superior made her what the *New York Daily News* called "a Marxist proposition." The English, their once impregnable sense of superiority sagging, will feel indebted to us for "Senators Also Told Girl Aid Was Asked to Bear 'Collective' Children," a *New York World-Telegram* headline which bears faint resemblance to the actual testimony, weird as that was. The café wits from Rome to Vienna will fully savor the moral sensitivity which led Senator McCarthy to shut off questioning of the maiden by his Senatorial colleagues with the warning that they were on television and little children might be listening in.

As an impresario, McCarthy is the best since Barnum. As a propagandist he is making Washington look worse than clownish. The crimes laid at Voice of America's door are as yet unclear, but if it had been broadcasting the Communist Manifesto 24 hours a day in 24 languages and enticing innocent schoolchildren with free pamphlets on surplus value, it could hardly have done America as much harm. The vagaries of American Senators were an old story to Europe in the days of the Trollopes, Mama and son, but this is something different. What has been broadcast to the world in the past week is that in dealing with the Eisenhower Administration, foreign countries are dealing with men who do not have the courage to be masters in their own house, though freshly installed by an overwhelming mandate.

THOSE LIKE WALTER LIPPMANN who hoped wistfully that victorious Republicans under a famous General would provide sufficient backing and backbone to put the wild men under control must be bitterly disappointed. A flurry of editorials congratulating Eisenhower on his first 30 days had hardly ended when he let the State Department knuckle under three (and perhaps four) times in a row to McCarthy. Two days after the inquiry into the Voice of America began, Secretary of State Dulles accepted the resignation of its chief, Dr. Wilson M. Compton, although the latter was highly praised in the report just submitted by a U.S. Advisory Commission on Information Congress itself had created in 1948. Dulles explained that Dr. Compton had submitted his resignation "a month ago"; one suspects it was the pro forma resignation all top officials submit when a new Administration takes over.

In three other instances, there were naked acts of submission. An inaccurate and insubordinate security agent demoted for "blabbing" to McCarthy was reinstated by the State Department. An order that no employe need talk to McCarthy's investigators and that none were to permit removal of files without specific permission was rescinded. The effect was to give McCarthy the run of the State Department and to put its employes on notice that McCarthy is its reigning power. Most cowardly of all was the Dulles order which followed hastily on the appearance before the committee of the novelist Howard Fast, as famous abroad as he is maligned at home.

AN ADVISORY COMMISSION AS POLITICALLY PASTEURIZED as possible (it included three conservative publishers and a Catholic University professor) had recommended sensibly that when an author like Fast said something favorable about American policy that made the best kind of propaganda behind the Iron Curtain where Fast is a literary hero. Instead of standing up against the political idiocy of the McCarthy committee and its less than sensational discovery that Fast is pro-Communist, Dulles issued an order saying that no material was to be used if it came from "any controversial person, Communist, fellow traveller, etc." This clears the air ways for American Legion speeches and Knights of Columbus manifestoes. Can anyone be silly enough to believe that something nice about America from Fast is bad propaganda while one of those "Christian Crusade" speeches, threatening to blow hell out of Russia and turn it back to the Tartars, will make us friends?

McCarthy is not stupid. He knows what he is doing. This is one of a series of little "Reichstag fires" to light his own way to power.

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